

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

Global Connections and Exchange: Multi-Regional Projects

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Office of Citizen Exchanges
Youth Programs Division**

ECA-PE-C-PY-10-05

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the Youth Programs Division for the Global Connections and Exchange program in Africa, the Middle East and East Asia/Pacific regions. Proposals must conform to the RFGP, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

Applicants desiring more information may contact the following program officer: Anna Mussman, phone: 202-632-6427; e-mail: MussmanAP@state.gov; fax: 202-632-9355.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

The Global Connections and Exchange (GCE) program is designed to foster interaction and long lasting relationships between secondary schools in the United States and schools in Africa, the Middle East and East Asia/Pacific regions. GCE regional projects must include at least three countries [specified below] in each region. Countries include:

The Global Connections and Exchange (GCE) program is designed to foster interaction and long lasting relationships between secondary schools in the United States and schools in Africa, the Middle East and East Asia/Pacific regions. GCE regional project proposals must include at least three countries or special areas [specified below] in each region. Countries and special areas include:

- **Africa:** Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, Ethiopia;
- **Middle East:** Israel and at least two of the following: Egypt, Jordan, West Bank/Gaza and Lebanon;
- **East Asia/Pacific:** Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam (Any proposal for East Asia/Pacific must involve all three countries.)

Note: Applicants may not include countries not listed and may not combine countries across regions.

Grant funding is intended to sponsor activities through virtual environments and face-to-face interactions in both U.S. and overseas schools in order to achieve the following goals: 1) enhance mutual understanding between youth and educators in the United States and their overseas counterparts; 2) improve educational tools, resources, and learning through the application of

information technology and student collaboration; and 3) empower youth to act as catalysts of change in their communities.

The grant recipient will be responsible for organizing online linkages that encourage communication and focus on specific themes and substantive collaborative activities.

Responsibilities of the grant recipient for this program include:

- Recruit and select students and educators;
- Identify and list U.S.-overseas partnerships;
- Set up, maintain and facilitate a site for informal discussions and networking;
- Create, maintain and facilitate a site for students to collaborate on theme-based projects;
- Develop a curriculum and complementary activities based on a project theme (listed below) for students and teachers to focus upon throughout the school year;
- Ensure quality control for all program elements;
- Coordinate with the Program Office, the Public Affairs Section (PAS) at the U.S. Embassy, the Ministry of Education, and local authorities as necessary throughout the life of the program;
- Design and implement an evaluation tool to assess program impact;
- Conduct people-to-people exchanges, including travel, visa and logistical arrangements;
- Monitor program activities and report on a regular basis to the program office;
- Manage all financial aspects of the grant;
- Conduct follow-up activities to sustain ongoing contact among schools.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Student Linkages

Applicants should recruit and select a specific number of U.S. and overseas participants to partake in theme-based course work throughout the year. Proposals should provide a substantive curriculum and clarify how program activities will be implemented. For example, how will students be selected to participate in theme-based projects? Will participants be members of the same class or will they be part of an after-school club comprised of students from different classes and grade levels? Who will have oversight responsibility at each school? Will participants be clustered and work as a group or will all schools be working on the same activity at the same time? Note: Foreign students must be specially selected to participate in theme-based projects.

Applicants should discuss with school administrators possible incentives for participation, such as offering students extra credit, volunteer hours, or credits toward graduation. The U.S. schools should involve a technology coordinator to help establish a web-based infrastructure and provide support for collaborative activities. Keeping in mind that the technical capacity of overseas schools may be less developed and teachers less technically savvy, the coordinator should consider ways in which s/he can provide assistance to overseas partner schools.

A social networking site, such as Facebook or Ning, will encourage informal communication and sharing of information. Applicants should describe ways in which they will train and encourage as many teachers and students as possible to interact through this site.

Themes

Each GCE regional program will utilize a variety of resources, technical applications and interactive methodology to focus on one particular theme throughout the year. Proposals should

include a curriculum and detailed work plan that clarify how the theme will be developed. Activities such as face-to-face exchanges, competitions, a small grants program and other initiatives should be relevant to the designated theme.

Applicants may choose one of the following themes:

- 1) **Environment** – Participants will complete projects that tackle issues such as pollution, natural resources, endangered species, waste management, and other relevant environmental concerns.
- 2) **Rule of Law** – Projects will focus on social issues and address ways in which government policy and respective justice systems deal with these issues.
- 3) **Social Entrepreneurship** – Participants will gain financial literacy skills and work together to design and operate social entrepreneurial projects that benefit their schools and communities.
- 4) **Media Literacy** – Participants will compare and contrast the role of media in their communities, analyze different media forms and create simple messages that influence others to take action.
- 5) **Food Security** – Participants will discuss and compare the agricultural production, nutrition, and accessibility of food in their respective societies. Students will create websites and other multimedia as an educational tool and share information about local organizations that address food and security needs.

Student Projects

Theme-based projects should be relevant for all participants. Projects should be of a determined duration with tangible, presentable outcomes. This may include a newsletter, video, website, or other resources that can be shared with schools and classrooms not directly involved in the program. Participating schools are also expected to partake in global initiatives including International Education Week and Global Youth Service Day. Students are encouraged to participate in international competitions and events such as Doors to Diplomacy, chats, and other web-based events sponsored by the State Department, respective U.S. embassies and other international organizations.

Web Presence

Each regional project should include a virtual environment in which participants focus on the designated theme throughout the year. The website should provide opportunities to collaborate, compile data, and share results. A separate social networking site, such as Facebook or a Ning site, will encourage students to share information about their country, culture and daily lives. Since this type of communication may be new to many participants, the grant recipient may need to provide them with specialized training so that they are able to navigate the site easily, work with on-line photos and videos, publish blogs, and lead discussions. Students should be encouraged to express themselves freely via this site and emerge as teen technology motivators through training and participation.

The two websites should be user-friendly and should acknowledge Global Connections as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

Exchanges

The program involves a reciprocal exchange whereby both U.S. and overseas youth leaders have the opportunity to meet their partners face-to-face. Exchange participants must have demonstrated a strong interest in the project's theme, in use of technology to share ideas and resources, and an apparent desire to help their communities. The exchange(s) must occur while schools are in session; the minimum duration of the stay is three weeks. Participants will live with host families, visit the partner school and, as much as possible, learn about the history,

culture, political institutions, and environment of the area. During the exchange, students should work together with their partners to solidify the theme of the project and discuss continued communication after the program ends. Each delegation should be prepared to make presentations to classes and community members about their schools and daily lives. During the exchange, participants should have access to the Internet and write about their experiences on the social networking site so that others at home can follow their journey and interact virtually. A community service project is strongly recommended.

Please note: Due to security concerns, American youth are prohibited from traveling to the West Bank through this grant, but are able to meet their Palestinian counterparts in Jordan or East Jerusalem. In regard to other countries in the Middle East, the grant recipient should consult the State Department's travel advisory to verify whether Americans are able to travel to specific countries. Information can be found at: <http://travel.state.gov/> In all cases, the grant recipient should consult with the program office before making arrangements for Americans to travel overseas.

Responsibilities for Conducting Exchanges

The grant recipient should work with host schools and families to furnish them with written guidelines to ensure that they have well-developed plans for:

- Orienting the exchange participants prior to travel and at arrival to provide the tools necessary for them to function effectively and have a successful experience;
- Avoiding and dealing with conflicts and misunderstandings that may arise - it is important that each school set aside time on a regular basis to address the visitors' expectations and concerns and adjust the program accordingly;
- Introducing the visitors to the community – its leaders and institutions;
- Ensuring exchange participants have ample time to write travel journals and interact with their classmates online;
- Conducting educational excursions that serve to enhance the visitors' understanding of the history, culture, political institutions, ethnic diversity, and environment of the region.
- Facilitating meetings with the Public Affairs Section and local community members.

The Department is interested in finding ways to provide visibility for the travelers, including media coverage in their communities and meetings with U.S. Embassy and local government representatives.

Follow-on and Sustainability

The grant recipient should provide ideas for maintaining contact among students and educators participating in the program. Partner teachers should disseminate information about the program widely and encourage new teachers to participate in similar projects in the future.

Evaluation

In order to demonstrate that the project is working toward the ECA goals outlined in the overview, applicants should devise specific objectives and link their program outcomes to those objectives. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time framed. The desired outcomes are not simply the successful implementation of the project activities but rather a measure of how the program activities will lead to the transformative effects expressed in the program goals.

The evaluation plan should describe specific activities and how these activities will be evaluated. Proposals should define indicators, that is, the concrete, observable activities that will demonstrate progress toward desired results.

Proposals should include a description of evaluation instruments and methodology, as well as how data will be organized, analyzed, and reported. The grant recipient is required to submit one interim program report, one final report and financial reports to ECA's program and grants office. In addition, the grantee is required to submit monthly newsletters highlighting activities. The Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy and the respective Ministry of Education should be informed on a regular basis regarding program activities and progress.

The final report should answer the following questions **in detail**:

1. How did the program benefit overseas and American participants?
2. How did the program serve USG foreign policy interests?
3. How will the program continue once funding expires?
4. How should the program be improved and expanded if funding is available?

The following items should be included in the final evaluation:

- Stated objectives
- Indicators
- Method(s) of measurement

Outreach

The applicant should highlight the program in diverse educational spheres, both nationally and internationally. Efforts should be made to publicize program activities in the media, education publications and online environments, including journals, newsletters and listservs. Presentations at conferences are strongly encouraged. All representational activities should clearly acknowledge the Department of State's support.

The ECA program office should be notified of recent events in a timely fashion. Program highlights should be succinct and written in journalistic format. Exchange participants should make special efforts to reach out to as many community members as possible to share cultural information and promote program efforts, both during the exchange and after they return to their home countries. Visual and virtual exposure of this program is of high priority.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items:

TAB A – Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet(SF-424)

TAB B – Executive Summary

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
4. Scope and Goals
 - Number and description of participants/schools
 - Theme and Fields Covered
 - Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
 - Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
 - Anticipated results (short and long-term)

TAB C – Calendar of activities/itinerary

Narrative

In no more than 20 double spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below:

1. Vision

Clearly outline the specific goals, objectives and desired measurable outcomes of this project. These will form the basis for evaluation.

2. Participating Organizations and Schools

The proposal must list all organizations and schools involved. Letters of support from school administrators/partner organizations are mandatory and must indicate a commitment to all requirements of the program, including hosting and sending teachers during the school year for a minimum of three weeks (see Tab E).

3. Program Activities

Describe how the project will be implemented and coordinated. Clarify the overall theme and describe all activities, both virtual and physical, that will support this theme. Include details on how participants will communicate with one another, what the final product will be and how it will be presented. Be sure to describe the overall impact of the project, that is, the wide audience of school and community members that will benefit from the program.

4. Selection

Describe the recruitment and selection process for U.S. and overseas participants involved in theme-based projects. Exchange participants must be selected from a pool of students who have been actively engaged in the project, have demonstrated leadership and communication skills, and are willing to share ideas and resources with others through the social networking site. Applicants must collaborate with the program office and receive approval prior to notifying participants of their selection.

5. Exchange

Orientation

Describe how exchange participants will be prepared prior to their travel and upon arrival. Participants should be provided with information on the following: details about the host family; stereotypes; planned program activities; adjustment issues; personal health and safety considerations; logistics, including money, communications, travel, food, etc.); and any matters relevant to the project. Host families should also receive information about the exchange participants, culture, etc.

Transportation and Logistics

Explain the plan for airline ticketing, including how it will be secured. *Important: All transatlantic or transpacific travel must be on a U.S. carrier.* For proposals that include a reciprocal exchange, the Youth Programs Division will prepare DS 2019 forms for participants to obtain J-1 visas for entry into the United States; the applicant organization will be responsible for obtaining visas for the American participants. The grant recipient will be responsible for submitting appropriate information to the Bureau in a timely manner before participant travel. Travel within the host country during the exchange component should also be explained.

Applicant organizations are required to use the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for participants in Bureau-funded exchanges.

6. Diversity

Describe how various program elements will promote an understanding of geographic, ethnic and socio-economic diversity of the foreign country and the U.S.

7. Outreach

Describe ways in which information about the program will be disseminated in participating schools and communities as well as in other venues.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Bureau program officers must be kept informed of the time line and implementation of each phase of the program. Overseas schools or representatives must keep the Public Affairs Section staff at the U.S. Embassy informed of the program. Clarify how this will be accomplished. The grant recipient will be responsible for providing one interim report and one final report. The reports will focus on measuring the level of achievement of stated goals and objectives.

9. Follow-on Activities

Proposals must outline a plan of action to maintain relationships between partner schools beyond the life of the Bureau's funding with a focus on virtual exchanges of information, continuing joint projects, etc.

10. Project Management

Identify by name the primary U.S. and overseas staff who will be implementing this project. Clarify specific experience and expertise regarding a wide variety of social media activities such as blogging, community development and management, social bookmarking, commenting, etc. Resumes should be included in Tab E.

11. Work Plan/Timeline

Please provide a timeline of activities for the life of this grant, including anticipated dates for the exchanges.

TAB D – Budget Submission

Budget Information – SF-424A

The grant provides a maximum of \$220,000 for each Global Connections and Exchange project. Up to three awards may be issued. Applicants are encouraged to offer sub-awards to qualified organizations and/or individuals and are requested to provide as much cost-sharing as possible, including investment by the private sector.

Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) regarding guidelines for a budget submission. An explanatory budget narrative must also be included.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Stipends for U.S. and foreign educators involved in project work and other activities;
- Participant travel;
- Exchange programs should be as cost efficient as possible; Bureau funds should not be used to subsidize lengthy excursions/field trips outside the host community;
- Per diem: American participants should provide their own pocket money. Costs paid by participants should be listed as cost-sharing in the budget;
- Visas: Charges for visas to overseas countries should be listed in the budget as either a grant-funded or cost-shared item;
- Education materials: Bureau funds may be used for the purchase of software or equipment such as digital cameras, flip-cams, webcams, etc. to support online project work. Applicants should primarily seek out donations or acquisition of equipment through outside sources;
- Small Grants Program: Students in the U.S. and overseas should have opportunities to apply for small grants to develop, implement and evaluate community projects. Ideally, students will raise funds themselves to match the amount offered through the grant.
- Administration expenses: The grant may be used to pay reasonable costs for program administration, technical support and other administrative needs. Cost sharing in these areas is strongly encouraged.
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Justifiable expenses directly related to program activities
- Follow on activities

TAB E - Letters of Endorsement

Proposals must include letters of agreement from all participating schools indicating support for the exchange in principle, endorsement of the proposed theme and joint projects, and explicitly agreeing to host/send exchange delegations for a minimum of three weeks during the school year. Letters from collaborating organizations should indicate the role they will play to support projects. Letters from politicians are generally not helpful.

Resumes

Resumes of all program staff, including technical coordinator, should be included in the submission. No resume should exceed two pages.

TAB F

1.) SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs".

2.) First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

3.) **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

4.) Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

Appendix

Applicants are welcome to include the curriculum and sample documents, such as brief school profiles, application forms, evaluation surveys, and orientation agendas, as well as other program related material in an appendix. Please be aware that too much additional paper can detract from the proposal.

IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal submission is due and the address at the Bureau to which the submission must be sent. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline.

For further information regarding this program or the competition, call Program Officer Anna Mussman, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Youth Programs Division, (202) 632-6427; e-mail: MussmanAP@state.gov